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ABSTRACT

To introduce primary grade children to the five themes in geography, a play about the United States is presented as a musical. The five themes are location, place, human environment interaction, region, and movement. The play is designed to help students understand the multicultural nature of U.S. history. Eleven states are located on a map and students describe characteristics of each state including landforms, state symbols, famous people, and natural resources. As the musical moves from state to state, songs related to each place are sung. The songs include "New York, New York" and "Sweet Home, Alabama." (KM)

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IN SEARCH OF THE HEART OF AMERICA

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A PRIMARY GRADE GEOGRAPHICAL MUSICAL PLAY IN STUDY OF THE UNITED STATES

BY
LOIS M. CHRISTENSEN

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IN SEARCH OF THE HEART OF AMERICA: A PRIMARY LEVEL, GEOGRAPHY RELATED PLAY

OBJECTIVES: Through participation in presenting this United States geographical play, the students will locate focal states and cities across the United States on a map and describe a characteristic of each focal state.

The students will describe some of the land forms from the various states featured in the play.

The students will list symbols connected with specific states in the United States.

The students will be able to name some famous personalities of specific states and describe why they are famous.

The students will be able to identify various natural resources associated with the specific states mentioned in the play.

The students will be able to describe the multicultural nature of the history of the United States.

The students will be able to identify the five themes of geography: Location, Place, Human Environment Interaction, Region, and Movement, through participating in this geographical related play.

U.S. GEOGRAPHY, PATRIOTIC, OR VALENTINE'S PLAY

GRADE LEVEL: Kdg - 2nd grade

Narrator:

Today, (this St. Valentine's Day, 1992), we are on a special journey. We are going to travel across the United States of America. We will travel with Uncle Sam as we learn about some of the states.

Uncle Sam:

"We want YOU to find the heart of America!

ALL:

"You've gotta have heart" (sung)

Narrator:

Our first stop is the Pelican State, Louisiana.

Student 1: Cajun

Louisiana's claim to fame is the Annual Mardi Gras - or Fat Tuesday, the celebration before Ash Wednesday. The home of American jazz music was born here.

Student 2: Fisherman

One of the biggest catches of fish is taken by Louisiana fishermen from The Gulf of Mexico. Shrimp is an important export.

SONG: "Shrimp Boats"

Narrator:

Let's mosey along to Texas, the lone star state.

Student 3: Cowboy

When we think of Texas, we think LARGE. Texas raises the most cattle on it's great ranches.

Student 4: Davey Crockett

Remember the Alamo? I, Davey Crockett, fought here for the freedom of Texas!

Narrator:

Could the heart of America be deep in the heart of Texas?

SONG: "Deep In The Heart Of Texas"

Narrator:

We follow Uncle Sam to Arizona whose statehood day is Valentine's Day 1912. Arizona is famous for its diverse land formations, mountains, desert, mesas, and forests.Could the heart of America be here? Or did we leave our heart in San Francisco?

SONG: "California Here I Come"

Narrator:

Father Junipero Serra built missions up the coast of California about a days walk apart.

Echo:
ALL SAY
WITH MUSIC San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, San Francisco, OLE!

Student 5: Father Junipero Serra

I built 21 missions on El Camino Real, the King's Highway.

Student 6: Mickey Mouse

I live in the heart of Disneyland with my heartthrob, Minnie and our friends Pluto, Donald Duck, and Goofy.

Narrator:

Let's check the heartland of America . . . Let's go with Uncle Sam to the Sunflower State of Kansas.

Student 7: The Tin Man

I found my heart in Oz. I followed the yellow brick road with Dorothy, Toto, Lion, and Scarecrow.

Narrator:

Sooner or later we'll find ourselves searching for the heart in Oklahoma. I can smell that wheat blowing in the breeze across the plains.

SONG: "Oklahoma"

Student 8: Indian

I am Sequayah, the famous Cherokee. Oklahoma means "land of the Red People."

Narrator:

It would be wise to check out the city of Brotherly Love, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for the heart of America.

Student 9: The Liberty Bell

I rang to proclaim liberty to all the land. I hang in Independence Hall. I announced the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

Narrator:

A heart, skip and a jump and we'll be in New York with 18 million hearts.

Student 10: The Statue of Liberty

My torch stands for Liberty. My light shines hope for all the millions of Immigrants who come looking for the heart of America.

Student 11: A Big Apple

I am the big apple; the largest city in the United States; home of fashion, Central Park, The Yankees, and Broadway.

SONG: "New York, New York"

Narrator:

Take the first country road to the South and we'll be wheeling to Wheeling West Virginia.

Student 12: A Coal Miner

West Virginia is a leader among the states in coal mining. The mountain state tells tall tales, John Henry is the most famous.

SONG: "Country Roads"

Narrator:

Let's take the Chattanooga Choo Choo to Tennessee. Will we find the heart of America here?

Student 13: Minnie Pearl

Hi, I'm Minnie Pearl. I am the heart of Opryland. Nashville is the capital of country music.

Student 14: Smokey Bear

When you come to the Smokies, you aren't looking for hearts. You are looking for me.

SONG: "On Top Of Old Smoky"

Narrator:

(Now we are in our sweet home, Alabama.) Could the heart of America be right here in Dixie?

Student 15: Alabama (State) with a big heart

I am the heart of Dixie. I am pine trees, mountains, cotton, steel, War Eagle and Roll Tide!

SONG: "Sweet Home Alabama"

Narrator:

We still have not found the heart of America!

ALL: "You've Gotta Have Heart"

PAUSE

Uncle Sam:

The Heart of America is in the hearts of all Americans.

SONG: "God Bless America"